

THE MODERN SCHOOLMAN

✠ ST. LOUIS UNIVERSITY ✠

VOL. 2

MAY-JUNE 1926

NO. 8

THE FREE WILL

Paul E. Dent

HAVE THEY THE RIGHT?

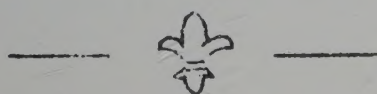
Bertram E. Ernst

PHILOSOPHY and LIBERAL EDUCATION

C. Howard Morrison

SEMINAR NOTES EDITORIAL BOOK REVIEWS

BULLETIN OF THE PHILOSOPHY SEMINAR



1905

MODERN AMERICAN
& CATHOLICISM

VOLS. 1-10

THE LIFE OF
JOHN F. KELLY

HAVE THEY THE RIGHT?
Devotion & Faith

PHILOSOPHY and LIBERAL EDUCATION
C. Howard Crosby

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A.M.D.G.

B.V.M.B

T H E M O D E R N S C H O O L M A N

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Published on the 15th of each month, from October to May, by the Graduate School of Philosophy of St. Louis University. Address all communications to the Editor.

VOL. II

St. Louis University, May 15, 1926

NO. 8

THE FREE WILL

There is a momentous day when bride and groom stand at the altar and say in turn, "I will!" At another momentous day occurs the reading of that interesting text called the "last will and testament." People speak of "wilful youth". They laugh over "Barkis is willing." They themselves indulge in a host of daily, ordinary, "garden-variety" of "I will-s" and "I won't-s". Indeed the world is bound up with a small word of four letters, and it would surely be a curious tale, if, in imitation of Van Dyke's story, one were to relate the things that must occur if the "lost word" were the little dynamic syllable "Will".

However, it almost seems now that our little dynamic is to be in a very true sense a "lost word". University professors have been taking careful account of the laws of conservation of energy, of the influence of heredity, of the reputed unreliability of inner consciousness, and -- we have no will. We are wrong in "willing". Bride and groom and testator are wrong. Even Barkis is wrong. Wrong too were those forty Fathers of our Constitution who so many years ago drew up the form of our Republic and inserted the small volitional word in each one of the twenty five sections of our Constitution, subscribing to their work under the declaration that it was done "in Convention by the unanimous c o n s e n t of the States present."

No will! Then our theory of crimes and punishments goes. For where there is no accountability, there is no crime. Vice and virtue become mere words. Patriotism has not a leg left to stand upon. It is commonly said that chickens come home to roost. Will the University Professors acknowledge their own fowls!

Here I must pause for a definition. Every one of course knows what we mean by the word "will", and so it should be easy to define. Unlike so many things, however, which "everyone knows", it is easy to define. By "will" -- I am all along speaking of "free will" -- is meant that endowment in virtue of which an agent, when

all conditions requisite for the performance of an action are given, can perform the action or abstain from it, can perform this action or that. The conditions requisite are on the part of God and on the part of man. Space permits the consideration of but the second of these, which are attention of the mind towards the object of volition, and technically, an objectively indifferent judgement. Of these two the latter alone needs any explanation. In giving this explanation I shall give also the scholastic theory of how the will works. The will, then, acts only under the influence of good recognized as such by the intellect: "sub specie boni intellectualiter cogniti." It may indeed choose evil, but never evil as evil, but rather as specious or apparent good. A free act occurs after this manner. The judgement proposes something as "good" (really or specious), there is attention to the "good", there is a weighing of pros and cons, there is the judgement that the "good" is desirable but not absolutely necessary for happiness. Then the will chooses. This presenting of the "good" as "desirable but not as absolutely necessary for happiness" is the description of the technical term, an objectively indifferent judgement. Had the "desirable good" been presented as "absolutely necessary for happiness" the will would not have been "free" to choose, but rather necessitated.

This paragraph of explanation past, how does a scholastic philosopher prove that the will is free? One way is the employing of the reductio ad absurdum used in an earlier paragraph. This argument is in itself not entirely complete, but it has nevertheless a way of hitting hard. It maintains that that doctrine is to be rejected as false and pernicious whose logical consequences are so anti-social as to disrupt the very foundations of our social, our political, and our religious society. Such, it continues, is unquestionably the logical tendency of any doctrine denying the freedom of the will. No free will! Then no crime, no virtue, no patriotism, no accountability. Likewise East of Suez and West alike "there ain't no ten commandments."

A second argument, a complete one, is based on the decidedly different ways we have of acting before, during, and after certain acts, which same modes of acting we neither have nor even think it sensible to have in the case of other actions. Let me explain.

Before many acts we are conscious of more or less deliberation over whether or not we shall act, and, if so, how. Before other acts we neither have nor would think it sensible to expect to have this same deliberation. Thus I deliberated over whether or not I would try to write this article. I did no such deliberating over whether or not I would digest my breakfast.

Again, in the very performance of certain acts, we are conscious that we have actively determined to carry out the performance to the completion; whereas, in the case of other acts, we neither have nor sensibly expect to have such a determination. I am even now conscious that I am determined to finish this article. I have no such determination over the digestion of breakfast. What a boon for a dyspeptic world if the will could see to the perilous processes of the gastric juices!

Finally, after certain acts we experience therefrom a sense of personal remorse or satisfaction. After other actions we have not this experience, in fact would regard it as absurd to expect it. The classic here is the example of the differences of the accidental and of the deliberate slayer of one's father. To

recall the example used above, I shall doubtless experience some satisfaction on the completion of this article. On the safe completion of digestion however — though here too will be a satisfaction — my experience will be of a different kind. My inner consciousness bears me out that my volition has had nothing to do with this latter affair.

I may now gather up the arguments of the last three paragraphs. "Teste experientia," then, in various actions I am in regards to those actions, before, during, and after, conscious of certain preparatory, accompanying, and subsequent actions and experiences, the like of which in the case of other actions I neither have nor would sensibly expect to have. Such a difference of experiences must have an adequate explanation. The only explanation that can be had is this: I have an inner consciousness of my own freedom of will, and hence distinctly different experiences according as I am conscious that the actions in question may or may not come under the province of my free will. Do I deliberate before writing, renew my determination to complete my writing, experience some sense of satisfaction, a sense of achievement after writing? These experiences I have ~~not~~ or these actions I do because I am conscious that I can write or no, can write this or that, "can perform the action or abstain from it, can perform this action or that." But I do none of these things nor have any of these experiences in the case of digestion? This can be only because I am conscious my will has nothing to do with this interesting process, and that here is not such a case in which I "can perform the act or abstain from it."

The University Professors referred to earlier in the paper have an objection here. They challenge the veracity of my consciousness, and would say, "How do you know that you are not being deceived when you, as you say, experience freedom in the actions of your will?" One answer would be merely to point back to the experiences themselves: deliberation before writing, no deliberation before digesting. Evident facts! No deception here! Why then the difference? Another answer comes from Lincoln's "You can't fool all the people all the time." All the people all the time (given, of course, the requisite conditions) experience consciousness of actively determining their actions. My experience is the universal experience, and the philosopher who contradicts or doubts universal experience had best look to his reasonings.

Another objection brought forward by "adversarii" takes its start from the law of conservation of energy. "Here," they would say, "is an undeniable physical law, and here that arbitrary energy of yours called free will is actually increasing the sum of energy of the universe. The reply takes us to the railway switch yards. That unique device, the switch, is very important, but still it does not furnish the energy which sends the locomotive singing down the tracks. It merely directs some other energy. So too does the will. It too is directive rather than motive. It determines the course of another energy, it does not originate energy. "Will-power" is a spiritual energy arising from a spiritual faculty, the soul, and hence not subject to the c.g.s. rule of measurement used in the law of conservation of energy.

A last objection comes out of talk of chromosomes and heredity and environment and complexes and education, and tells us man is the true child of circumstances, that all manner of external things, as it were, forces his hand, and pre-determines and necessitate him towards certain destinies. This objection merits the praise of Newman, who, I believe, spoke of there being "a soul of truth" in things erroneous. It is true that heredity and environment and education have

(Continued on page one hundred and eleven)

SAVE THEM THE RIGHT?

"They have no right to interfere. I do not care what Mexico does."

My next door neighbor and I were having another argument. Thus he happened to make this remark. Well, an argument is not very unusual in itself. He and I have a good many arguments. But there is an interesting question involved in this argument, especially with affairs as they are on the southern border of the United States to-day. What are the rights of one nation to interfere with and controul the domestic affairs of another?

In settling the ethical rightness or wrongness of an act of this kind it is necessary to consider a corporate body of people joined in a nation as an individual. It has the responsibilities of an individual in its dealings either with private persons or with other nations. It has the same rights and duties as those established by natural law between private persons.

It seems to be a quite universal opinion among us freedom-loving Americans (as we delight to call ourselves) that one nation is never justified in meddling with the affairs of another nation so long as the said nation does not interfere with us or our citizens. This opinion, so far as it exists, is wrong. There are several instances under which the right of intervention may arise. The first one we shall discuss, is not so important at present as it was in past ages; yet it often comes up in connection with early American history.

Has a Christian nation the right of forcing religion upon a pagan one at the point of the sword? Did the Spanish for instance, as I believe they are sometimes and wrongly accused of doing, have a right to conquer the original inhabitants of America on the grounds that it was necessary to Christianize them? The answer is an emphatic "No". As a national body, the original inhabitants had a natural right to follow their own beliefs as dictated by their consciences, so long as they did not interfere with the rights or duties of others. No Christian nation had any more right to attempt to force religion upon them by violence than I would have to go across the street to John Smith and say, "See here," John, "if you do not become a Catholic, I am going to give you the beating of your life," and forthwith proceed with the process. Under such circumstances few would question the fact that I was doing wrong. But there are other elements which may enter in to change the complexion of things. Suppose that John Smith was told in a gentlemanly, kindly way by a Christian minister, that he was in error and that if he did not mend his life he would go to Hell. Or suppose the same minister was preaching to others in John's presence with no reference in particular to John. Now John resents this very much and in fact gets furious. He proceeds to thrash the minister or even to threaten his life. Have I a right to interfere now? Most assuredly I have, and perhaps even a duty to do so. I may adopt the severest measures to make John keep the peace and so discontinue his attacks upon the good man.

We have a parallel case. The Christian missionary had a God given right and duty to go to pagan lands and labor for the furtherance of the gospel, and to condemn sinful pagan customs. But suppose that the pagan authorities resented his preaching and cast him into prison and even sentenced him to death. In that case any Christian nation would have a right to interfere and to intervene with armed force, and to go so far as to subjugate the pagan people completely, and keep them

in subjection so long as seemed necessary. Instances of such circumstances can be found in history but they are not so numerous as they are sometimes imagined to be.

In another phase of international ethical relations, we have the case of the nation which has no government, or whose government is criminal, reveling in the blood of inoffensive victims and rejoicing in all crimes against religion and morality. Such an example Russia has recently furnished to the world. What should be the procedure of a Christian nation observing this condition of affairs? Is it her part "to tend to her own business" as the saying goes? She can probably do so without censure, but again the illustration of the private individual helps to throw light upon the subject.

If I see Tom Jones violently assaulting an innocent person, can I not, and indeed am I not bound to interfere even with some peril to my person to preserve the victim? I certainly am, and if protest does not effect the desired object I am not required long to refrain from violence. Suppose even that Tom Jones is trying to do away not with another but with his own life. Am I not allowed to intervene and cut the rope if he be trying to hang himself, or adopt any other suitable means to save his life? Yes; I am allowed to do all this to prevent the deed. The same holds in the case of nations. No nation has a right to deprive a man of life without sufficient reason. Nor has it the right to persecute and commit unnameable crimes against its own citizens who are peaceably engaged in serving God in a proper manner, with no actions calculated to disturb the rights of others. Acts of authorities which violate those rights of its citizens, are contrary to the natural law, and a condition of affairs might arise where other nations would have the right and the duty to do all in their power to prevent such outrages, even with armed force. Such a condition has actually existed. However, such intervention is an extreme measure justified only in case of extreme necessity. In the concrete, all circumstances must be duly weighed.

Another allied instance which comes in here in the discussion of the ethical rights and duties of one nation toward another, but one which may not be so important at present, is the right of a nation to take lands in a country inhabited by native tribes. If the land is not actually in the possession and use of the natives, there is nothing to forbid a civilized nation's assuming possession of such territory. However, if the incoming nation first recognizes the nationality of existing tribes and their dominion over the land by purchasing territory, then the strangers are bound in subsequent times to observe the rights of the natives and to refrain from any territory not purchased. In other words the newcomers are not permitted, after gaining admittance by purchase, to take possession of new lands by violence when, due to their foothold originally secured by purchase, they find themselves in a position to do so very advantageously to themselves. This is a principle which has been quite frequently violated in our own North America, where early English explorers and settlers would buy little tracts of land in order to secure a foothold in the new country, only to oust the natives from the remainder of their holdings when a sufficiently strong colony was established.

Guided by these principles, an examination of history alone will determine the rights of suzerainty of some of our more progressive nations over less powerful neighbors. It remains a fact, however, that under many circumstances the intervention of one nation in the affairs of another is allowed, though a quite contrary opinion may prevail. Perhaps this right of intervention has so often been abused that we have come to frown upon it under any circumstances. Maybe, on the other hand, it is

our own selfishness, which thus likes to cloak itself under the appearance of justice and virtue, that restrains us from dutiful intervention in the domestic affairs of foreign powers, especially if considerable trouble is involved. Few scruples ever seem to have existed in regard to the right of native tribes, but where greater trouble is offered with no hope of lucre, national consciousness, sometimes becomes quite sensitive. This paper does not aim at encouraging intervention in every domestic squabble of neighbors, but against those who say it is never justified, we wish to show that the contrary is true.

I believe I have convinced my worthy neighbor too. At any rate, he was busy studying history the lasttime I talked with him.

Bertram E. Ernst, S. J.

PHILOSOPHY AND POPULAR KNOWLEDGE UNRELATED ?

I paid a visit to the folks. As we sat and talked, we were enjoying the music of a new modeled piano. We were not paying much attention to it until -- and ever since that day I have been sure of at least one thesis of Father Frick: "Certitude is the firm assent of the mind to the truth, based on a motive that excludes the simultaneous possibility of the contradictory."

Here is how it happened. In the middle of the piece came a lilt that sounded familiar. I looked up thoughtfully: "What is that?"

"I don't know: why?"

"Seems to me I heard that before. I wonder what it is."

The piece we were playing had a Spanish flavor to it, tambourine, castanet effect. We played it again and tried to guess. The guesses were poor. Presently my sister came from the music cabinet with a piece of music in her hand. She tried it but it did not sound right. Again we played the roll and repeated the little section of the piece another time. Then my sister played the original -- the two were the same.

"See there," she said, "it is the same. Your mind just wasn't satisfied till you had found out for sure."

Oh shades of all ye ancient philosophers! What an easy way to learn philosophy! For a week I had been trying to solve the "Veritas perfecta in judicio, quia est quantum mens postulat" and trying to associate the thesis on certitude with its three points: status perfectus mentis, necessario verus, clara cognitio. I had always failed and yet in a single sentence, one who had never seen the inside of a philosophy book, taught me two theses, opened my eyes and proved to me that philosophy is a scientific way of stating truths which we have always known from common sense. Probatur thesis: Status perfectus mentis: "Your mind just wasn't satisfied;" Clara cognitio : "till you found out;" Necessario verus : "for sure."

Raymond H. Witte, S. J.

PHILOSOPHY AND LIBERAL EDUCATION

We are familiar with the watch word of the classicists that true liberal education is rooted in the literature of Greece and of Rome. We have heard that it is inseparably bound up with our own grand English literature, seasoned, mayhap, by familiarity with other modern languages. The savants of the nineteenth century made the same claim for the sciences. But it is only rarely that the term 'liberal culture' is mentioned in the same breath with philosophy. And yet, though liberal education might be conceived of apart from philosophy any one of the studies mentioned, without philosophy it is impossible.

True intellectual excellence is more than the acquirement of miscellaneous knowledge. It is more than the acquirement of the best and most worth-while knowledge. It is present only to the mind that, well furnished with the best information, has gripped that information, wrestled with it, reduced it to order and system, and finally so stirred it up that it responds instantly to the demands of its master. Only in this sense is knowledge power.

To create this unifying, harmonizing, and controlling power of the mind, more essential to the production of a truly educated man than any particular study or group of studies, is the role of philosophy in the educative process. Philosophy alone, it is true, will not completely educate a man. The treasures of literature, and science, and history are the indispensable materials, but philosophy supplies the form of true culture.

Herbart styles philosophy, "the true perfecter of education." "No gymnasium," he says, "truly finishes the education of its students, and to do so is the function of philosophy of the so-called faculty of philosophy." "The faculty of philosophy," says Schliermacher, "is the basis. Every university student should devote his whole first year to the study of philosophy. He must first assimilate the general, else he will miss the essence of a university education." (Willmann-Kirsch, "The Science of Education" p. 412). Note the stress laid on the assimilative function of philosophy, and compare with Newman's famous lecture "Knowledge Viewed in Relation to Learning" where he says, "It (enlargement of mind) is making the objects of our knowledge subjectively our own, it is, to use a familiar word, the digestion of what we receive into the substance of our previous state of thought. There is no enlargement unless there be a comparison of ideas, one with another as they come before the mind, and a systematizing of them. We feel our minds to be growing and, expanding then, when we not only learn, but refer what we learn to what we know already."

It is reflection and comparison that transform knowledge into wisdom. Hence the place of honor accorded philosophy, as being preeminently a reflective and judicial study, in the curriculum of the Jesuit College of Arts and Sciences. Coming in the junior and senior years, it serves to unify, harmonize, solidify and crown the edifice of a general education.

This aspect of philosophy seems to have been completely lost sight of by the vast majority of our colleges since the introduction of the elective system. Alexander Meiklejohn, when president of Amherst College, once said, "Our knowledge is at present a collection of scattered observations about the world, rather than an understanding of it. The old classical curriculum was founded by men who had a theory of the world and of human life. They had taken all available content of human knowledge, and had brought it together into a coherent whole....They had taken the separate judgements of science, philosophy, history, and the arts, and had welded

them together, so established their relations with one another, so freed them from contradictions and ambiguities, that, so far as might be in their day and generation, human life as a whole, and the world about us were known, were understood, were rationalized." (*The Liberal College*, pp. 43,44.— Italics inserted).

But the reason why philosophy today is not accomplishing its appointed task in the scheme of our education, lies deeper than the mere lack of proper coordination of subjects which electivism brought about. The defect is in the nature of the philosophy as studied in the non-Catholic institutions. No one will deny that such philosophy broadens its followers by acquainting them with the history of thought, sharpens their critical faculties, stirs up in them the spirit of inquiry. This is well and good. But such is not the philosophy that will serve as the skeleton framework of general culture, giving it stability, symmetry, beauty. It is vague and jumbled and mainly negative. It presents no "logical, unified, complete system of mind culture in accord with the established laws of human thought;" it takes no stand on some "definite propositions expressive of truth;" in a word it does not "rise to the dignity of a science." (Cf. *Catalogue of the College of Arts and Sciences, St. Louis University*).

"What is needed are clear-cut principles that are part and parcel of a complete system of philosophy; and these must be presented as such, and not as the outcome of haphazard reflection," says Willmann in "The Science of Education". In all these respects does Neo-Scholastic philosophy qualify for the role of "the true perfecter of education."

The same author says in another place, "Our schools have lost the traditions of philosophical instruction since the thinkers turned their backs on Aristotle. The philosophical instruction of today is only a field for conducting experiments. May it soon be reconverted into a fruit-bearing orchard."

If it is true that Scholastic philosophy has been dignified and ennobled by its services to Catholic theology, it is also true that to those outside the Church this does not constitute its chief recommendation. If the attempt is to be made to point out its services to humanity, to bring it into contact with life in America, we should overlook a most powerful appeal to those for whom education is fast becoming a species of demi-god, were we to fail to point out the unrivaled contribution Scholastic Philosophy has to make toward producing true liberal culture.

C. Howard Morrison, S. J.

"Numquam igitur laudari satis
digne philosophia poterit, cui
qui pareat omne tempus aetatis
sine molestia possit degere."

— Cicero: "De Senectute"

ABOUT THE CORRIDORS

Out of the sixteen candidates who presented theses for the M. A. degree from the School of Philosophy, fifteen men have written their papers on philosophical subjects.

Mr. Byrne	A Study of Criminal Activity in the United States.
Mr. Cantwell	The Infallibility of the Senses: A Discussion of the Precise Meaning of this Phrase.
Mr. Dent	The Logic of the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius.
Mr. Clark	The Experimental Proof of the Essential Difference between Sense and Intellect.
Mr. Göttsdiefinger, C. R.	Is There an Essential Difference between Living and Non-Living Bodies?
Mr. Herr	Is the Principle of the Conservation of Energy opposed to the Existence of a Vital Principle?
Mr. Jaglowicz, C. R.	An Introspective Analysis of Color-Blind Sensations.
Mr. Lauer	The Psychology of Music. Syncoponia.
Mr. Manhard	The Nature of God as Arrived at by the Argument from Causality.
Mr. Schwallier	A Discussion of the Activity Shown in Tissue Culture.
Mr. Wahl	An Introspective Analysis of Color-Blindness.
Mr. Walter, A. J.	Science, Religion and Morality in the Light of Transcendental Idealism.
Mr. Walter, F. E.	The Aims and Methods of the Bollandists, Pioneers in Modern Historiography.
Mr. Welfle	The Experimental Evidence for the Freedom of the Will.
Mr. Wellmuth	Aristotle and the Principle of Causality.

THE FREE WILL

(Continued from page one hundred and five)

much to do with the making of man. Our own selves could bear us out on this point. And was it not so great a man as St. Augustine ~~who~~ but for certain supernal advantage would have been the gallows' victim? However the generalization from this grain of truth must not be so broad as to deny freedom of the will. The true generalization — the one, too, scholastics have ever held — is that external factors in as much as they may at times obscure or even temporarily prevent the use of reason, may consequently render difficult or even prevent the free use of the free will. Thus, extremes of fear or anger or pain may at times be so insistent in their demands that the judgement is obscured, and the will becomes necessitated because the reason has first been overmastered. On this point our doctrine must be clearly kept in mind. ~~We do not~~ say man has a free will; we do not say he always acts freely in those cases wherein the will is employed.

I come to an end. When the free will of man is no longer taught in this land of ours, may the Americans of the future open their histories and read again the convictions of freedom our forefathers put into their words when "by unanimous consent" they framed the Constitution under which we now live.

Paul E. Dent, S. J.

SEMINAR NOTES

FIRST YEAR
Group A

The distribution of the theses sheets marks the home stretch in the race whose goal in first year is a knowledge of things in general and of that most beautiful of all concepts "Ens a se".

It is the consensus of opinion among the members of the study club in first year that to some degree we have been successful in our task of making philosophy a real, living, wide-awake subject. The last meetings of our unit have been conducted after the manner of round table discussions. Knotty and involved problems were untangled; very often the light finally dawned only after we had groped about in the dark for months.

We were not Peripatetics in the sense that Aristotle used the term, yet we managed to keep the discussions lively and to the point. I feel that I am expressing the sentiments of all the members of the study club when I say that our weekly meetings gave savor and relish to a subject that is sometimes dry as dust.

Joseph A. Foley, S. J.

Group B

Papers read during the past month:

Mr. Smith,	The History of Formal Logic.
Mr. Wirttenberger,	Philosophy Since 1900 .
Mr. Morrison,	Philosophy's Place in a Liberal Education.
Mr. Brown,	Why "Popularize Philosophy"?

These papers, as their titles show, are broader in scope than most of those presented during the year. They attempted to offset a certain loss of perspective, a weakening of one's grasp on the significance of philosophy as a whole, which inevitably attends intense application to one phase of the subject. In creating inspiration, a factor not to be overlooked in the study program, they rounded out the year's work of the club very satisfactorily.

Fructus ministerii: Regular meetings, 21; papers read, 18; symposiums, 3. First meeting Oct. 24; last May 9. Six men read three papers each.

C. H. Morrison, S. J.

SECOND YEAR

The final meeting of our seminar will consist of a brief and complete resume of our course in Psychology. Its object is to give us, by means of a logical sequence, a bird's eye view of the subject matter, which no doubt has become a little rusty from lack of use.

Going back in retrospect over the work of our seminar during the past year we find that, besides our regular meetings, we were privileged to listen to several interesting and special talks by Fr. Gruender on Hypnotism, Ouija Board, and others. By means of an interview afforded two of our number, we learned the views of Doctor

Burrows, noted experimenter on excised cells. The seminar, besides having been an incentive to added interest in the study of our class room philosophy, has directly contributed not a little to our fund of knowledge.

F. T. Keeven, S. J.

THIRD YEAR

The members of this group are one in declaring that the weekly meetings were a constant source of profit to all concerned. Among the benefits accruing to the individuals, the following were specially commented on:

- 1) Better knowledge of the matter, as a result of preparing to discuss topics with others;
- 2) Satisfactory solutions of difficulties proposed;
- 3) A better appreciation of the connection between the different branches of philosophy;
- 4) Stimulus to personal effort, and necessity of defending one's personal opinions against objections.

In view of these advantages, the members of the third year seminar wish to go on record as being very well satisfied with the results of their organized efforts

J. J. W.

AMERICAN JESUIT PHILOSOPHICAL ASSOCIATION

As we go to press, we have no definite information about the program of the philosophical section of the Jesuit Educational Association for the Fifth Annual Convention to be held this August at Loyola University, Chicago. Rev. George H. Mahowald, S. J., of John Carroll University, is president; Mr. Peter A. Brooks, S. J., of Loyola University, is secretary.

"Continue your resolve
To suck the sweets of sweet philosophy."

— Shakespeare.

*

EDITORIAL SECTION

GOD AND THINGS

He was just a little fellow, but he was a cripple for life. As I looked down at him sitting there smiling that sunshiny Italian smile for all that his legs were withered and useless, I wondered what he would do in life. Perhaps my musing showed itself in my attitude. At any rate he suddenly answered my question with, "Father, I'm going to write things."

"Going to write?"

"Yes, Father, I want to write and tell people about God and — things."

Later that afternoon on our way home I told my companion of the incident. He said with facile learning, "That's a defense reaction. He can't chop wood, so he is determined to do something he can do." I suppose the worries of an editor were burdening me at the time, for I made some reply to the effect that "wish some people would get that kind of defence reaction," and with this the incident passed for a while.

Now it has come up again however. The little cripple wanted to write in order (and here he hit the heart of this writing game) "to tell people about God and things!" He had something to say and he respected himself sufficiently to think it worth saying. He had seen, even at his age of ten or eleven, that there is something radically wrong in this allowing our periodicals and publishing houses to go on cramming the minds of a nation with error and half truth. A drop of ink — he would have applauded this — makes millions think, and a piece of chalk makes millions talk. Why can not some of this, MOST of this thinking and talking come from ink and chalk of — let me say it plainly — Catholic thinkers!

Catholic Philosophy has only one apology to make for her proposals, namely that she does not use enough ink and chalk "to tell people about God and things!"

In making out your schedule for your work this summer, do not forget to make provision for an article for THE MODERN SCHOOLMAN.

With this issue THE MODERN SCHOOLMAN completes its second volume. The board of editors wishes to express its grateful appreciation for the assistance rendered it by all who have helped to make this enterprise a success. Special thanks are due to Messrs. L. Doyle, Doenemeyer, and A. Walter, for assistance in type to Mahoney, Gillespie, Miller, and Marquard for the mimeographing of the bulletin; also to Wirttenberger for the cover designs. The next issue will appear in October

Are there any subjects that you would like to have treated in the pages of THE MODERN SCHOOLMAN? Any suggestions to offer? The editor is anxiously awaiting to hear from you.

B O O K R E V I E W S

Mind and Its Place in Nature. by Durant Drake, Professor of Philosophy in Vassar College. The Macmillan Company, New York, 1925. \$2.00

This latest book of Prof^{ss}or Drake, is an ingenious discussion of the nature of the mind and of its acts, of its relations to the body and to the outside world. It contains much subtle and much solid thought,- much thought that is both subtle and solid, and much that is subtle and not solid.

In the preface the author craves the reader's patience for the expositions and theories which he feels forced to propound in the opening chapters, and which he apprehends will be hard for some readers to accept until justified by what is to follow. And yet it is the opening chapters that are the most plausible of all, and the rest of the book is filled with fallacies which would have far more meagre speciousness if left without the semblance of support afforded by the earlier accurate and well reasoned observations and interpretations of experience.

The author opens his discussion bu noting that there are what he calls three categories in cognition - first, the knower, or self, secondly, the object known, and thirdly, the datum of experience, or the objective element of cognition, which is naturally referred to the object and naturally supposed to exist in it. Opposing those pan-objectivists who hold that every datum of experience referred to the outer world exists in that world exactly as referred, he shows to what contradictions such a doctrine leads, and establishes very well what in neo-scholastic terminology is the thesis that at least some sensible qualities exist Only fundamentally in nature. He goes further than the neo-scholastics, however, advancing and persistently maintaining the theory that no qualties, whether formally sensible or not, really exist at all, and that the only existential foundation for quality appearance is structure and motion of matter.

After having done this and having made some observations on the neural and cerebral functions involved in sense-cognition, the author proceeds to identify the psychic with the physiological aspects of cognition. He holds that sentience is the very substance of all matter, from which all mind has been evolved, and which becomes conscious when arranged in the inconceivably intricate structural and functional relation which obtains in an operative animal brain. He notes that this theory is not psycho-physical parallelism for the simple reason that there can be no parallelism between a thing and that thing itself, between matter as structure and motion and that same matter as mind. He holds, not that all matter is united to mind-stuff, but that all matter is mind-stuff - that it is perceived as stuff by external observation, which is carried on through the sense and can reach only qualities, or rather structure and motion under the appearances of qualities, and that it is perceived as mind - its very substance - by introspection, which can be applied by each person only to that very small portion of reality within his own organs of cognition. Every experience, however simple and irreducible it may appear, is the result of the fusion of the myriads of infinitesimal sense-elements, or atoms of mind-stuff which operate together in some process of the cognizing organism and are perceived as a unit, just as, on a vastly larger scale, colors and sounds which can be proved experimentally to be the resultants of fused tints and tones, are perceived

by the ained ear as perfectly simple. Since matter is mind, such a "supernatural" or "mythical" element as the soul is unnecessary, and its introduction into any theory of psychology, though not incompatible with the theory here propounded, is only an element of confusion.

The Self, therefore, is nothing more than the organism, its individual characteristics, or personality, consisting of the intricate internal arrangement of electrons and protons or whatever the ultimate particles of matter may be, which arrangement determines the organism's (or the person's) cognitive and volitional and behavioral response to the stimuli reaching it from its environment. The author holds that this implies no denial of free-will, since the organism is always free to act according to its nature. He may therefore be called a free-will determinist. But this is only one of many self-contradictions patent or latent in this cleverly written and, in many ways, acute discussion of Mind and Its Place in Nature.

Among the features which commend the book to the sympathetic consideration of neo-scholastics are: first, the sincere endeavor of the author to base his discussion and arguments on objective evidence rather than on preconceived theory; secondly, his use of experimental data as a basis of his discussion of the nature of sensible qualities; thirdly, his tenet that color and sound exist only fundamentally in nature; fourthly, his avoidance of idealism on the one hand, and on the other, of such relativistic realism as openly flouts the principle of contradiction; fifthly, his holding to the substantiality of the thinking subject, and to the persistence of personality in the absence of actual consciousness. The expression is clear, and excellent in every respect, making the discussion easy and pleasant to follow. The book is well worth the attentive reading of the neo-scholastic epistemologist and psychologist, and on the other hand it gives evidence of the great need there is for the proposing of neo-scholastic doctrine in the same attractive form, to reach the open and keen minds of such men as Professor Drake, for whom neo-scholasticism seems to be a sealed book, a mythical nothing, hardly a name!

Pierre Bouscaren, S.J.

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An Introduction to Philosophy. by Edgar Sheffield Brightman, Borden Parker Browne Professor of Philosophy at Boston University. Henry Holt & Company, New York, 1925, \$3.75.

This book fascinates the reader from the very beginning by its beautiful English and its broad, genial, optimistic spirit, and keeps him delighted to the end. The author's breadth of sympathy is shown by the gentleness and courtesy which with he speaks of thinkers whose views he rejects, and by his scrupulous care to avoid misrepresentations even of the most erratic systems of thought. His sterling and well-poised optimism is shown in his views on the objectivity of values, on teleology, on the existence of a personal God, on immortality, and on the practical value of religion and philosophy.

It may seem strange to some of us that in such a book, written by such a man, there is, so far as the present reviewer can recall, only a single mention of scholasticism, and that that is a gross misrepresentation. Speaking of universals

(p. 128)

"The debate between Plato and Aristotle was handed on to the scholastic philosophers of the Middle Ages, one party of whom said, 'Universalia sunt realia', and another 'Universalia sunt nomina'. The former were called realists, the latter nominalists. The realists furnished theology with a basis for doctrines of the church universal, of Adam and Christ as representing universal humanity, of the presence of the body of Christ as a real universal in the particular elements used in the sacrament (doctrine of transubstantiation). The nominalists emphasized particular facts; they encouraged the scientific investigation of nature." The author is evidently naively ignorant of what the greatest of the medieval scholastics and the neo-scholastics really held and hold concerning the very important question of universals, and he evidently fails utterly to see the complete independence of the theological doctrines he mentions from any theory even distantly resembling the so-called Platonic realism.

In his discussion of the criterion of truth, he passes in review ten criteria and finally accepts that of coherence, without giving any indication of ever having heard that there is a widespread school of thought which makes the criterion objective evidence,-- except in so far as he seems to suppose this criterion to be what he calls intuition. In his discussion of such central concepts as substance and soul he displays a like absence of acquaintance with what scholasticism has to say.

Professor Brightman's own philosophy is what he calls personalisticidealism, which may be formulated as follows;* Thought and object known are distinct. But the objects of human thought exhibit so many of the characteristics of thought that the most coherent theory of their nature must be that they are themselves of the same nature as thought. They are held to be the expressions and manifestations of the thought and purpose of a Supreme Person, Whose infinite perfection and wisdom and intelligence and benevolence transcend our power of comprehension, but give us a foundation for religion, for trust in the midst of mysteries and unexplainable temporal miseries, and for the hope of immortality.

The reader can hardly fail to conceive for the author a sympathy and respect akin to personal esteem; and the regret spontaneously recurs that such a man has not yet been reached by the broad, comprehensive thought of the system whose greatest fault is that it is without adequate expression outside the circle of its own adherents.

Pierre Bouscaren, S.J.

Journal of Philosophical Studies. Published by The Macmillan Company, Ltd. of London, quarterly, for the British Institute of Philosophical Studies. 3/6, 14 s per year, post free.

In January of this year, the British Institute of Philosophical Studies published the first number of its new quarterly periodical, the Journal of Philosophical Studies. It is under the editorship of Sydney E. Hooper and a large corps of assistants. The patronage of the British Institute and the reputations of the editors give promise that this new magazine will be of sound quality, although it

will undoubtedly differ to some extent from the scholastic opinions which THE MODERN SCHOOLMAN espouses. For the seal of the Institute is placed only upon works of true scholarship, and is a sure criterion that learning and study and work are the background of the publications which it stamps with its approval.

J. E. C.

BOOKS RECEIVED FOR REVIEW

The Macmillan Company, New York.

Science and the Modern World.

By A. N. Whitehead.

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THE MODERN SCHOOLMAN

VOLUME III

1926, October - 1927, May

AMS REPRINT COMPANY
NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10003

THE
MODERN SCHOOLMAN
VOLUME III
1932-1933
REPRINTED 1965
WITH THE PERMISSION OF THE
ORIGINAL PUBLISHER

AMS REPRINT COMPANY
NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10003

Printed in U.S.A.

AMS REPRINT COMPANY
NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10003